

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 25, 2020

Honorable David Bernhardt
Secretary
Department of Interior
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Mr. Secretary:

We write to bring your attention to an application for a National Park Service Historic Landmark Designation for the Hermitage Hotel in Nashville, Tennessee. This is a time-sensitive matter given the role played by the Hermitage Hotel when Tennessee became the 36th state to ratify the Nineteenth Amendment to the Constitution. This August is the centennial of this historic moment in our nation's history.

By August of 1920, 35 of the 36 necessary states had ratified the Nineteenth Amendment. On August 9, 1920, the governor of Tennessee called a special session of the General Assembly to consider the issue. The Hermitage Hotel served as the headquarters for journalists and politicians, as well as pro-suffrage and anti-suffrage activists from around the state and the nation who descended on Nashville during the special session. Ms. Carrie Chapman Catt, one of the leaders of the pro-suffrage movement, stayed in the hotel for five weeks while she strategized how to persuade members of the General Assembly to vote for ratification. The hotel is the singular, non-governmental building that served as the most prominent site of the crowning achievement for the suffrage movement, securing the right of women to vote nationwide.

Congress has made it a priority to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Nineteenth Amendment. Bipartisan resolutions have been passed, and a bill was signed into law (P.L. 116-71) directing the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the centennial. It would be a fitting tribute to memorialize the Hermitage Hotel's role with a Historical Landmark designation.

We respectfully request you expedite consideration of the Hermitage Hotel's application for a Historic Landmark designation in time for the 100th anniversary celebration of women's suffrage that will take place this August.

Sincerely,



Marsha Blackburn
United States Senator



Lamar Alexander
United States Senator